

Dockets Management Branch  
Food & Drug Administration  
Department of Health & Human Services  
12420 Parklawn Drive, Room 1-23  
Rockville, MD 20857

1114 '00 APR 10 A10:00

Re: Docket 98P-0203/CP1

Dear FDA,

Please grant the petition filed under docket #98P-0203/CP1 to ban forced molting . Battery cage hens suffer more than any other animals on earth. These poor hens are forced to live out their lives in cramped cages - virtually immobile. They are deprived of freedom of movement, the joy of raising chicks, of spreading their wings, feeling the earth under their feet, and seeing the sky. Battery hens are already living in hellish conditions, to deprive them of food for as long as fourteen days is cruel beyond belief . Food is the only joy these poor creatures have left in life. During the forced molt, food - deprived hens peck desperately at empty metal troughs and are driven to pluck and eat each other's feathers to obtain nutrients. Countless hens die from the stress. When food is finally restored to the surviving hens, many of them choke to death in trying to swallow after being starved for so long.

Forced molting is a cruel practice that should be illegal. It is so stressful to the birds that it impairs their immune system, predisposing the hens and their eggs to Salmonella infection. Forced molting is a major cause of Salmonella poisoning. USDA studies in an article in Poultry Science show forced molting , in combination with Salmonella infection, created an actual disease state in the alimentary tract of tested hens. Depriving hens of food for prolonged periods wrecks the hens immune systems, making them susceptible to the poisonous bacteria that infect the factory farm buildings in which they lay their eggs in battery cages. In a report published in the Journal of the American Veterinarian Medical Association entitled "Salmonella Enteritidis infections in the United States" (December 15, 1998) the authors noted that not only is Salmonella a major health problem but that "Eggs are the predominate source of Salmonella Enteritis infections in humans." From a standpoint of prevention the report noted that Salmonella is a food born disease that has been traced back to the farm of origin, and that infected hens have been the source of many outbreaks. The report concluded that while consumers can reduce their risk of Salmonella infection by avoiding eating undercooked or raw eggs, "control of Salmonella will require preventing infections in egg-laying and broiler chickens".

For the sake of the hens who suffer in agony during forced molting and to protect U.S. citizens from Salmonella poisoning, forced molting should be banned in this country as it was in Great Britain in 1987. In closing, I would like you to consider three quotations:

98P-0203

C 1947

"The worst sin toward our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them. That's the essence of inhumanity".

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

"The assumption that animals are without rights and the illusion that our treatment of them has no moral significance is a positively outrageous example of Western crudity and barbarity. Universal compassion is the only guaranty of morality"

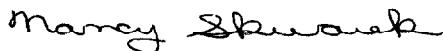
Author Schopenhauer (1788-1860)

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

Mahandas Gandhi (1869-1948)

Please have pity on the poor hens and show concern for the health of the American public and ban forced molting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Skwarek".

Nancy Skwarek

Nancy Skwarek  
V Edgerton Ave  
Waukegan WI 53221-3519

Billy Mitchell



Docket No. 98P-0203 / CPI  
Dockets Management Branch  
Food and Drug Administration  
Department of Health and Human Services  
12420 Parklawn Drive, Room 1-23  
Rockville, M.D. 20857

